

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-11, 26, 30 and 33, and amend claims 12-14, 17, 20, 23, 27 and 29 as follows:

1-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) A plug retaining system for use with a power tool configured for maintaining electrical continuity between the plug and the tool, said system comprising:

contact means configured for engaging the plug disposed on the tool;

and

attachment means configured for attaching said contact means to the tool;

wherein said attachment means includes a ring disposed on the tool configured for attaching said contact means to the tool and said contact means includes at least one finger extending from said ring configured for engaging the plug; and

~~The plug retaining system of claim 11 wherein said at least one finger further comprises~~includes: a tapered portion extending generally axially from said ring;

a flared portion extending generally axially from said ring;
and

a contact surface configured for engaging the plug, wherein
said contact surface is formed between said tapered portion and said flared
portion.

13. (Currently Amended) The plug retaining system of
claim ~~11~~12 wherein said ring further comprises at least one attachment formation,
wherein one of said at least one attachment formation is an aperture, a ridge, a slit
and a smooth surface configured for engaging corresponding structure on the tool.

14. (Currently Amended) A plug retaining system for use
with a power tool configured for maintaining electrical continuity between the
plug and the tool, said system comprising:

contact means configured for engaging the plug disposed on the tool;
and

attachment means configured for attaching said contact means to the
tool;

~~The plug retaining system of claim 7~~ wherein said attachment means
includes: at least one latch disposed on the tool and configured for attaching said
contact means to the tool; and

said contact means includes at least one clamp extending radially from said at least one latch and configured for engaging the plug.

15. (Original) The plug retaining system of claim 14 wherein said at least one clamp further comprises a spring attached to said at least one latch and a clamp member disposed at a distal end of said spring, wherein said at least one latch is configured for transmitting force to said at least one clamp to engage the plug.

16. (Original) The plug retaining system of claim 14 further comprising a docking enclosure provided on the tool, wherein said clamp protrudes through an aperture in said docking enclosure.

17. (Currently Amended) A plug retaining system for use with a power tool configured for maintaining electrical continuity between the plug and the tool, said system comprising:

contact means configured for engaging the plug disposed on the tool;

and

attachment means configured for attaching said contact means to the

tool;

~~The plug retaining system of claim 7~~ wherein said contact means includes: a cradle partially conforming to the shape of the plug configured for engaging the plug; and

said attachment means includes a tether attached to said cradle and to the tool configured for attaching said cradle to the tool.

18. (Original) The plug retaining system of claim 17 wherein said cradle includes:

a crown on said cradle configured to be proximately located to a cord-extending surface of the plug, wherein said crown includes a cord-receiving portion configured for receiving a cord from said cord-extending surface of the plug; and

at least one leg extending from said crown and configured for attaching said cradle to the tool.

19. (Original) The plug retaining system of claim 18 wherein said cradle includes:

a foot disposed at a distal end of said at least one leg configured for engaging the tool; and

a flexure portion located on said at least one leg configured for releasing said foot from the tool.

20. (Currently Amended) A plug retaining system for use with a power tool configured for maintaining electrical continuity between the plug and the tool, said system comprising:

contact means configured for engaging the plug disposed on the tool;

and

attachment means configured for attaching said contact means to the tool;

~~The plug retaining system of claim 7~~ wherein said attachment means includes:

a tether configured for attachment to the tool; and

said contact means includes a wrap disposed at a distal end of said tether and configured for engaging a loop of the cord.

21. (Original) The plug retaining system of claim 20 further comprising: fastening means disposed at at least one location on said wrap, wherein said wrap is configured to be removably connected to itself.

22. (Original) The plug retaining system of claim 21 wherein said wrap and said tether are disposed in operational relationship to each other

when the loop of the extension cord is encircled to restrain the loop along a cord axis, said cord axis being generally parallel to a major axis of the tool.

23. (Currently Amended) A plug retaining system for use with a power tool configured for maintaining electrical continuity between the plug and the tool, said system comprising:

contact means configured for engaging the plug disposed on the tool;

and

attachment means configured for attaching said contact means to the tool;

~~The plug retaining system of claim 7~~ wherein said contact means includes: a clamp configured for engaging the plug; and

said attachment means includes at least one support rib disposed on the tool and configured for attaching said clamp to the tool.

24. (Original) The plug retaining system of claim 23 wherein said clamp further comprises:

a push-button member slidably disposed on the tool; and

a clamp member disposed on the tool adjacent said push-button member;

wherein said push-button member is configured for positioning said clamp member into engagement with the plug.

25. (Original) The plug retaining system of claim 24 wherein said push-button member further comprises:

a contact portion disposed on said push-button member configured for contact with the user;

an engaging portion disposed on said push-button member configured for deforming and displacing said clamp member into engagement with the plug; and

a catch disposed generally centrally on said push-button member configured for retaining said push-button member in an inward and an outward position.

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended) A plug retaining system for use with a power tool configured for maintaining electrical continuity between the plug and the tool, said system comprising:

contact means configured for engaging the plug disposed on the tool;

and

attachment means configured for attaching said contact means to the tool;

wherein said attachment means includes a collar rotatably disposed on the tool configured for attaching said contact means to the tool;

wherein said contact means includes at least one spline associated with said collar and configured for engaging the plug; and

~~The plug retaining system of claim 26~~ wherein said at least one spline has a free end and a fixed end, said free end configured for deforming and displacing upon engagement with a locating structure disposed on the tool.

28. (Original) The plug retaining system of claim 27 wherein said locating structure comprises at least one pawl and at least one stop, and wherein said at least one spline comprises at least one notch, said at least one pawl and said at least one notch are configured for permitting limited rotation of said collar, and said at least one stop is configured for preventing rotation of said collar.

29. (Currently Amended) A plug retaining system for use with a power tool configured for maintaining electrical continuity between the plug and the tool, said system comprising:

a ring disposed on the tool configured for attaching a contact means to the tool, said ring disposed on the tool immediately proximate a receptacle of the tool configured to receive the plug; and

at least one finger extending from said ring configured for engaging the plug;

wherein said at least one finger further comprises:

a tapered portion extending generally axially from said ring;

a flared portion located at a distal end of said at least one finger; and

a contact surface configured for engaging the plug, wherein said contact surface is formed between said tapered portion and said flared portion.

30. (Cancelled)

31. (Original) The plug retaining system of claim 29 wherein said ring further comprises at least one attachment formation, wherein one of said at least one attachment formation is an aperture, a ridge, a slit and a smooth surface configured for engaging corresponding structure on the tool.

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32. (Original) The plug retaining system of claim 31 wherein said ring is friction fit into said at least one locating structure.

33. (Cancelled)